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EXAMINER	
SCHLAK, DANIEL K	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3653	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/652,707	AVANT ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Daniel K Schlak	3653

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *20 January 2004*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-262* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) *1-20,113-142 and 173-262* is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *21-112 and 143-172* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *31 August 2000* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *3*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Claims 1-20, 113-142, and 173-262 have been withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to nonelected Groups I and III, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in Paper No. 14 on the grounds that the search would be no undue burden because the home class of both Group I and Group III is the same, namely class 700, subclass 224. The Examiner asserts that this subclass is generic to control systems for mail sorting, and that the particular searches for the subject matter of the diverse groups is indeed different, depending upon the control methods themselves. Such as, class 705 covers the searches for database manipulation and communications between postal servers, etc., class 209 covers mail sorting (hardware, methods, etc.), class 700 covers the algorithms and control circuitry by which mechanical systems achieve various procedures. Granted, in an application such as the instant, the searches for groups will overlap. However, the divergence of the searches among the groups is existent and is not so minimal as to negate the "one patent, one invention" doctrine by which restriction precedent has heretofore determined the extent to which groups can and can not diverge while still finding home in the same patent application. As for the burden, such a judgement of undue or acceptable is up to the examiner, and by all means in this application the burden has been judged as undue.

Claim Objections

Claim 40 is objected to because of the following informalities: line 5 of the claim recites "configured process to..." The Examiner believes it should be changed to "configured to process...", which seems to be the intended meaning of the recitation. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 69, line 19; claim 90, line 21; claim 111, line 20; claim 112, line 22; claim 143, line 11; claim 157, line 11; claim 171, line 11; and claim 172, line 12; all recite the recitation "the data file". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in each of the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 21-76, 80, 81, 83-86, 88-97, 101, 102, 104-107, 109-112, 143-153, 155-167, and 169-172 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 4,832,204 to Handy et al. (hereafter "Handy").

Handy teaches a method of processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server (72) comprising the steps of receiving an identification file (70) corresponding to a mailpiece, resolving mailpiece information for a mail processing device using the identification file, and updating a secondary identification code server (90) using the identification file (see column 4, lines 19-40 and column 6, lines 53-69) . The mail processing device (shown in general by the box labeled "sortation management system") is a bar code sorter controlled by (62). The identification file contains an identification code and a postal code (again, see column 6, lines 58-61). The identification code is an ID tag. The postal code is a POSTNET (zip) code. The secondary identification code server is a SICS server (as it is secondary to the HMC in the relative point of view shown in figure 7, and as it processes information based upon an identification code). Handy's method/device stores the identification file in a lookup table and maintains a service area table for a secondary identification code server. The lookup table is inherent within *all of* the HMC (72), the central computer (90), and the Sortation Update File (86). Following the disclosure of Handy, all information files (SWAK assignements) will be ordered in any database, and most importantly, in the HMC, according to their ID numbers, to be looked up by that number. This is inherent and absolutely necessary in Handy. Surely the databases of the HMC, HQ central

computer, and Sortation Update file, will not use the weight (!) of the items as the lookup criteria, or any other of the SWAK information, when they have a numeric identifier to work with. Thus, although not explicitly stated in Handy, it is inherent that all of the SWAK assignements will be ordered and maintained, in any of the modules (HMC, HQ central computer, Sortation update file) that work with more than one SWAK at a time, in an order dictated by their ID numbers, as this is simply the only acceptable way to do it. In the HMC it can be called a "lookup table", and in the Central computer and Sortation update file it can be called a "service area table", as it is a table that serves an area. A table is a table, and what it is called will not affect the outcome of its activity. Applicant is reminded that claims are to be examined by their interpretation in the broadest terms available within the context of the specification, and until further meaning is ascribed to these "tables" they will be interpreted as nothing more than tables, n x m data-bearing records within an electronic machine and sequenced by the identifier via which they are looked up and manipulated. The claims are extremely broad and as they read on Handy, no further explanations of the tables will be made. All information of the HMC will affect the information in the Central computer the information in the Sortation update file. The information in the Sortation update file will indirectly and eventually affect the information in the HMC. The information of the Sortation update file is affected by directives from both the Central computer and the HMC. Thus, any table used by one of the elements is inherently "for" the other elements.

In Handy's method/device, the resolving step further comprises the substeps of: receiving an identification code from a mail processing device (via scanner 60), where the mail processing device obtains the identification code from the mailpiece, processing the identification code (in processor 64 and in HMC, which work together) to determine the identification information, using the identification file corresponding to the identification code; and transmitting the identification information to the mail processing device (at 62). The identification file further includes an image capture time, inherently in that the time is already past and is not an element which could be stored in a file anyway, thus the remanents of it are the time taken to obtain the file information, which will always be communicated via the information actually in the file, and a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file (what else would they represent?). A file that has status bits necessarily has status bits that indicate aspects of the file, even if the aspects of the file communicated by the status bits are the aspects of the status bits themselves, which cannot escape being conveyed with the file.

Handy teaches a system for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server comprising an identification file receiving component (within HMC) configured to receive an identification file (via line 70) corresponding to a mailpiece, a resolving component configured to resolve mailpiece information for a mail processing device using the identification file, and an updating component configured to update a secondary identification code server using the identification file. The mail processing device is a bar code soder. The identification file contains an identification code and a postal code. The identification code is an ID tag. The postal code is a

POSTNET code. The secondary identification code server is a SICS server. Handy's device further comprises a storing component configured to store the identification file in a lookup table. Handy's device comprises a maintaining component configured to maintain a service area table for a secondary identification code server. The resolving component includes: an identification code receiving component configured to receive an identification code from a mail processing device, where the mail processing device obtains the identification code from the mailpiece; a processing component configured to process the identification code to determine the identification information, using the identification file corresponding to the identification code; and a transmitting component configured to transmit the identification information to the mail processing device. The identification file further includes an image capture time and a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file. In the foregoing, all components have been described via the foregoing paragraph which dealt with the method they perform.

Handy teaches a system for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server comprising means for receiving an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece, means for resolving mailpiece information for a mail processing device using the identification file, and means for updating a secondary identification code server using the identificatiorfile. Through the teaching of the method and the device, given that all parts are computerized, Handy clearly teaches a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server, the computer readable code comprising an identification file receiving module configured to receive an

identification file corresponding to a mailpiece, a resolving module configured to resolve mailpiece information for a mail processing device using the identification file, and an updating module configured to update a secondary identification code server using the identification file.

Handy teaches a method of processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server, comprising the steps of receiving an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece, storing the identification file in a lookup table, maintaining a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, resolving mailpiece information for a mail processing device using the identification file, and updating the secondary identification code server using the service area table. The service area tables and lookup tables of the HMC, Central computer, and Update file, work together in updating files, transmitting information, controlling the sortation, and tracking the items. The mail processing device is a bar code sorter. The storing step further comprises revising an old identification file in the lookup table with a revised identification file (this will be done whenever there is a change in the status of an item. When an item's file is entered intot the system, an old file is revised with a new. When the item arrives to the HUB, the tables will be updated to show the arrival. The identification file contains an identification code and a postal code. The identification code is an ID tag. The postal code is a POSTNET code. The service area table contains a plurality of postal codes corresponding to the secondary identification code server. The secondary identification code server is a SICS server. The resolving step further comprises the substeps of receiving an identification code

from a mail processing device, where the mail processing device obtains the identification code from the mailpiece, processing the identification code to determine the identification information, using the identification file corresponding to the identification code; and transmitting the identification information to the mail processing device. The identification file further includes an image capture time and a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file.

Handy teaches a system for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server, comprising an identification file receiving component configured to receive an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece, a storing component configured to store the identification file in a lookup table, a maintaining component configured to maintain a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, a resolving component configured to resolve mailpiece information for a mail processing device using the identification file, and an updating component configured to update the secondary identification code server using the service area table (the SICS, or central computer, will be updated by all activity within the system, including the service area tables within itself and those of the HMC). The mail processing device is a bar code server. The storing component includes a revising component configured to revise an old identification file in the lookup table with a revised identification file. The identification file contains an identification code and a postal code. The identification code is an ID tag. The postal code is a POSTNET code. The service area table contains a plurality of postal codes corresponding to the secondary identification code server. The secondary identification

code server is a SICS server. The resolving component includes an identification code receiving component configured to receive an identification code from a mail processing device, where the mail processing device obtains the identification code from the mailpiece, a processing component configured to process the identification code to determine the identification information, using the identification file corresponding to the identification code, and a transmitting component configured to transmit the identification information to the mail processing device. The identification file further includes an image capture time. The identification file further includes a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file.

Handy teaches the updating component operating at a predetermined time interval. For instance, it cannot update continuously in all instances, and thus there must be some periods of pause. These periods and their length are caused by prior events. Thus, the time interval is predetemined by the prior events.

Handy teaches a system for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server comprising means for receiving an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece, means for storing the identification file in a lookup table, means for maintaining a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, means for resolving mailpiece information for a mail processing device using the identification file, and means for updating the secondary identification code server using the service area table.

Handy teaches a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code

server, the computer readable code comprising an identification file receiving module configured to receive an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece, a storing module configured to store the identification file in a lookup table,a maintaining module configured to maintain a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, a resolving module configured to resolve mailpiece information for a mail processing device using the identification file, and an updating module configured to update the secondary identification code server using the service area table.

Handy teaches a method of processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server, comprising the steps of receiving an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece from an image control unit, wherein the identification file contains a file identification code and a file postal code, storing the identification file in a lookup table, maintaining a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, resolving mailpiece information for the mailpiece, wherein the resolving step further comprises the substeps of receiving an identification code from a mail processing device, where the mail processing device obtains the identification code from the mailpiece, processing the identification code to determine the identification information, using the identification file corresponding to the identification code, and transmitting the identification information to the mail processing device, and updating the secondary identification code server, wherein the updating step further comprises the substeps of generating a data file using the service area table (the existence and use of the service area tables thoughout the system mandates

that they will be "used" in all updates, as they are to be correlated among all modules for all item identifiers associated with files) corresponding to the secondary identification code server to identify identification files in the lookup table, and transmitting the data file to the secondary identification code server. The mail processing device is a bar code server. The storing step further comprises revising an old identification file in the lookup table with a revised identification file. The identification code is an ID tag. The file identification code is an ID tag. The file postal code is a POSTNET code. The service area table contains a plurality of postal codes corresponding to the secondary identification code server, which is a SICS server. The identification information transmitting step further comprises the substep of transmitting the identification file corresponding to the identification code if the identification code is found in the lookup table. The identification information transmitting step further comprises the substep of transmitting the file postal code corresponding to the identification code if the identification code is found in the lookup table. The data file is a SICS ZIP data file. The identification file further includes an image capture time and a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file. The updating step occurs at a predetermined time interval.

Handy teaches the updating step occurring when a predetermined number of identification files have been received. For instance, once a file has been received, one file has been received. The predetermined number is "one". Before the updating step occurs, the predetermined number has been reached. After the system has been in operation for a while, 20,000 files will have been received. Now the predetermined

number is 20,000. After reaching this mark, for sure 20,000 files have been received, and when the updating step is performed again or for a first time, it will be subsequent to this accomplishment.

Handy teaches a system for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server, comprising an identification file receiving component configured to receive an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece from an image control unit, wherein the identification file contains a file identification code and a file postal code, a storing component configured to store the identification file in a lookup table, a maintaining component configured to maintain a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, a resolving component configured to resolve mailpiece information for the mailpiece, wherein tine resolving component further comprises an identification code receiving component configured to receive an identification code from a mail processing device, where the mail processing device obtains the identification code from the mailpiece, a processing component configured to process the identification code to determine the identification information using the identification file corresponding to the identification code, and an identification information transmitting component configured to transmit the identification information to the mail processing device, and an updating component configured to update the secondary identification code server, wherein the updating component further comprises a generating component configured to generate a data file using the service area table corresponding to the secondary identification code server to identify identification files in the lookup table, and a data file transmitting component configured

to transmit the data file to the secondary identification code server. The mail processing device is a bar code sorter. The storing component further includes a revising component configured to revise an old identification file in the lookup table with a revised identification file. The identification code is an ID tag. The file identification code is an ID tag. The file postal code is a POSTNET code. The service area table contains a plurality of postal codes corresponding to the secondary identification code server, which is a SICS server. The identification information transmitting component further comprises an identification file transmitting component configured to transmit the identification file corresponding to the identification code if the identification code is found in the lookup table. The identification information transmitting component further comprises a file postal code transmitting component configured to transmit the file postal code corresponding to the identification code if the identification code is found in the lookup table. The data file is a SICS ZIP data file. The identification file further includes an image capture time and a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file. The updating component operates at a predetermined time interval. The updating component operates when a predetermined number of identification files have been received.

Handy teaches a system for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server, comprising means for receiving an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece from an image control unit, wherein the identification file contains a file identification code and a file postal code, means for storing the identification file in a lookup table, means for maintaining a service area table database

with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, means for resolving mailpiece information for the mailpiece, wherein the resolving means further comprises means for receiving an identification code from a mail processing device, where the mail processing device obtains the identification code from the mailpiece, means for processing the identification code to determine the identification information using the identification file corresponding to the identification code, and means for transmitting the identification information to the mail processing device, and means for updating the secondary identification code server, wherein the updating means further comprises means for generating a data file using the service area table corresponding to the secondary identification code server to identify identification files in the lookup table, and means for transmitting the data file to the secondary identification code server.

Handy teaches a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server, the computer readable code comprising an identification file receiving module configured to receive an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece from an image control unit, wherein the identification file contains a file identification code and a file postal code, a storing module configured to store the identification file in a lookup table, a maintaining module configured to maintain a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, a resolving module configured to mailpiece information for the mailpiece, whereinthe resolving module further comprises an identification code receiving module configured to receive an identification code from a mail processing device, where the mail processing device

obtains the identification code from the mailpiece, a processing module configured to process the identification code to determine the identification information using the identification file corresponding to the identification code, and an identification information transmitting module configured to transmit the identification information to the mail processing device, and an updating module configured to update the secondary identification code server, wherein the updating module further comprises a generating module configured to generate a data file using the service area table corresponding to the secondary identification code server to identify identification files in the lookup table, and a data file transmitting module configured to transmit the data file to the secondary identification code server.

Handy teaches a method of processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server, comprising the steps of receiving an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece from an image control unit wherein the identification file contains a file identification code and a file postal code, storing the identification file in a lookup table, maintaining a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, and updating the secondary identification code server, wherein the updating step further comprises the substeps of generating a data file using the service area table corresponding to the secondary identification code server to identify identification files in the lookup table, and transmitting the data file to the secondary identification code server. The mail processing device is a bar code sorter. The storing step further comprises revising an old identification file in the lookup table with a revised identification file. The file identification code is an ID tag. The file

postal code is a POSTNET code. The secondary identification code server is a SICS server. The data file is a SICS-ZIP data file. The service area table contains a plurality of postal codes corresponding to the secondary identification code server. The identification file further includes an image capture time and a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file. The updating step occurs at a predetermined time interval. The updating step occurs when a predetermined number of identification files have been received.

Handy teaches a system for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server comprising an identification file receiving component configured to receive an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece from an image control unit wherein the identification file contains a file identification code and a postal code, a storing component configured to store the identification file in a lookup table, a maintaining component configured to maintain a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, and an updating component configured to update the secondary identification code server, wherein the updating component further comprises a generating component configured to generate a data file using the service area table corresponding to the secondary identification code server to identify identification files in the lookup table, and a transmitting component configured to transmit the data file to the secondary identification code server. The mail processing device is a bar code sorter. The storing component further comprises a revising component configured to revise an old identification file in the lookup table with a revised identification file. The file identification code is an ID tag.

The file postal code is a POSTNET code. The secondary identification code server is a SICS server. The data file is a SICS ZIP data file. The service area table contains a plurality of postal codes corresponding to the secondary identification code server. The identification file further includes an image capture time. The identification file further includes a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file. The updating component operates when a predetermined number of identification files have been received.

Handy teaches a system for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server comprising means for receiving an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece from an image control unit wherein the identification file contains a file identification code and a file postal code, means for storing the identification file in a lookup table, means for maintaining a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, and means for updating the secondary identification code server, wherein the updating means further comprises means for generating a data file using the service area table corresponding to the secondary identification code server to identify identification files in the lookup table, and means for transmitting the data file to the secondary identification code server.

Handy teaches a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for processing mailpiece information by a primary identification code server, the computer readable code comprising an identification file receiving module configured to receive an identification file corresponding to a mailpiece from an image

control unit, wherein the identification file contains a file identification code and a file postal code, a storing module configured to store the identification file in a lookup table, a maintaining module configured to maintain a service area table database with a service area table for a secondary identification code server, and an updating module configured to update the secondary identification code server, wherein the updating module further comprises a generating module configured to generate a data file using the service area table corresponding to the secondary identification code server to identify identification files in the lookup table, and a transmitting module configured to transmit the data file to the secondary identification code server.

For the foregoing, the most pertinent passages of Handy are column 3 (lines 1-33), column 4 (lines 14-55), column 5 (lines 3-5, 11-14, 22-34, and 63-68), column 6 (lines 12-24 and 53-68), and column 7 (lines 1-4, 18-20 and 26-56).

Column 7, lines 25-51, give the best explanation of the updating of the secondary server by the primary server, and also the updating of the sortation update electronic file.

In column 7, lines 52-56, it is stated that the central computer contains all relevant package information. As this information is sent to it by the HMC's in all the various HUB's, and vice versa, the majority of the claim language of the elected group, described above, of the instant application, is anticipated inherently just in this statement. Moreso this is evident because all of the computers use tables and databases in ordering the files by identifier numbers, and much of the activity is done in

real-time, with the updating, revising, and movement of data being a shared and immediately communicated responsibility among the three different types of processors.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 77-79, 82, 87, 98-100, 103, and 154 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Handy.

Handy does not teach deleting an identification file to be deleted from the lookup table in response to a delete file message.

In the realization of the disclosure of Handy, it is inevitable that files will be deleted. Whether this is done when the item reaches its final destination and/or is signed for by a receiver, or whether the company using it runs a purge of all old files at the end of a year, the deletion of files is common sense. No one in their right minds, much less one of skill in the art, would forever continue to input ID files to the lookup table without ever deleting them. Thus, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to creat a delete-signal that triggers the deletion of one file or more, to save space and avoid clutter in the table/database.

Although Handy teaches a telecommunications link, Handy does not teach sending and receiving test data from the mail processing device and confirming the test

data. Testing a system that uses a telecommunications link is of the most elementary steps taken to establish the cooperation between elements of the system. Had claim 77 (and other such claims) gone farther into detail, perhaps further explanation would be necessary. However, connecting, sending, receiving, and confirming is the oldest, most common manifestation of the manner by which a device which operates over distance is shown to work, calibrated, etc. This dates back to telegraphs, even, or for a more pertinent example, to the Paris tests performed on radio waves at the end of the 19th century. It goes without saying that this most elemental of testing methods would be utilized by one of ordinary skill in the art in practicing Handy, because it could not be conceived by an engineer, scientist, practicioner that it would ever be other than preposterous to forego this step.

Handy does not teach transmitting an error message if a code is not found in the lookup table. Handy does not deal with hypothetical situations such as this, but this does not mean that they would fail to find themselves realized in such a basic situation. The realization by the system of Handy that a code is not found in the lookup table, if not associated with an outright, immediate, automatic error message of some type, would lead to even more substantial errors, which, somewhere along the line, would be noticed and a message concerning the error would be "transmitted" somehow, somewhere. What else would the system do? Clearly in the practice of Handy one would not wish a parcel to stay on the conveyor going round and round until the place closes down. The only way to avoid this would be an error message that derives from the failure to find the code.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Daniel K Schlak whose telephone number is 703-305-0885. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Donald Walsh can be reached on 703-306 - 4173. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

dks

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